

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A process for the preparation of monochloroacetic acid from chlorine and acetic acid in the presence of a catalyst by reactive distillation.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to claim 1 wherein claim 1,  
wherein the reactive distillation is conducted in a reactive distillation apparatus is used, the  
apparatus comprising that comprises:

\_\_\_\_\_ a reactive distillation column;

\_\_\_\_\_ a cooler unit, and

\_\_\_\_\_ a reboiler;

\_\_\_\_\_ wherein the reactive distillation column comprises comprising at least one  
column internal, which column internal is on one side connected to a the cooler unit and on  
the other side connected to a the reboiler, and which

\_\_\_\_\_ wherein the reactive distillation apparatus is provided with a first inlet for  
supplying chlorine, a second inlet for supplying acetic acid, a third inlet for supplying the  
catalyst, a first outlet for removing the MCA-containing monochloroacetic acid-containing  
product, and a second outlet for recovering the catalyst, whereby the first inlet and the first  
outlet are positioned closer to the reboiler than the second and the third inlets, and whereby  
the second outlet is connected to the cooler unit; and

\_\_\_\_\_ wherein the process comprising the steps of comprises

\_\_\_\_\_ supplying chlorine via the first inlet,

\_\_\_\_\_ supplying acetic acid via the second inlet,

\_\_\_\_\_ supplying the catalyst via the third inlet,

\_\_\_\_\_ recovering the catalyst via the second outlet, and

\_\_\_\_\_ removing the ~~MCA-containing~~ monochloroacetic acid-containing product via the first outlet.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a catalyst is acetyl chloride.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a applied pressure is at least  $0.5 \cdot 10^5$  and at most  $10 \cdot 10^5$  Pa.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a mass ratio of chlorine to acetic acid is at least 0.1 and at most 2.0.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein the catalyst is acetic anhydride and a mass ratio of acetic anhydride to acetic acid is at least 0.0001 and at most 0.25.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the column internal is a tray, whereby the number of trays is at least 1 and at most 80.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a liquid residence time in the reactive distillation column is at least 0.1 and at most 5 hours.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 2 wherein~~ claim 2, wherein the second inlet is positioned close to the cooler unit.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the process is conducted continuously.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The process according to elaim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein a diluting gas is added, the diluting gas being selected from the group consisting of hydrochloric acid, an inert gas such as nitrogen or helium, or and a mixture thereof.

12. (New) The process according to claim 11, wherein the inert gas is selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, helium and mixtures thereof.